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NUTRITION REPORT

REVISIT TO ETHIOPIA

(Discussion of Preliminary Survey Report)

NAMRU<sub>3</sub>, Lebanon, FAO Rome, WHO, Geneva  
June 11 - July 3, 1959

By

Dr. William J. McGanity

Dr. Lester Teply

Best Available Copy

Interdepartmental Committee on Nutrition for National Defense  
National Institutes of Health  
Bethesda, Maryland

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Dr. Lester J. Teply, Director of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation and Laboratory Director of the Ethiopian Nutrition Survey and Dr. William J. McGanity of Vanderbilt University and Deputy Director of the Ethiopian Nutrition Survey, left New York on Thursday, June 11, at 1730 hours en route to Rome, Beirut and Cairo, Addis and Geneva. The purpose of the trip was to: 1) discuss the preliminary draft of the Ethiopian report with members of the United States Mission in Ethiopia; 2) to conduct a Nutrition Seminar in Addis Ababa on the findings therein and to resurvey the school children in the Addis Ababa area that were part of the therapeutic trial of vitamins A and C supplementation; and 3) to explore with the U.S. Missions in Lebanon and Egypt the possibility of future ICNND activities.

ROME: We arrived at 2000 hours, June 12, 1959. Awaiting us at the airport was a message from Dr. vanVeen of FAO indicating their desire to discuss the Ethiopian findings the next morning at 0830 hours. The Joint FAO-UNICEF policy committee had just completed their session. We were briefed on their future programing for Ethiopia by Drs. Cyrus French and Sabin.

At FAO Headquarters we met Drs. James Burgess, Director of Nutrition Section, WHO, Dr. Wallace Ackroyd, Director of Nutrition, FAO, as well as Dr. vanVeen. We briefed them on the Ethiopian findings and outlined in generalities the recommendations. In return they outlined their plans and made helpful suggestions, - re priority of recommendations and composition of Ethiopian National Nutrition Board. We departed Rome 1500 hours, June 13, 1959.

BEIRUT: Arrived Beirut 2100 hours June 13, 1959. We were met and escorted through customs by one of the United States Embassy chauffeurs. Accommodations and arrangements for our stay were made by the Embassy (Mr. Lippincott of USOM).

The next morning, Sunday, June 14, we contacted Mr. Lippincott and made arrangements for a briefing of Embassy personnel on the morning of the 15th of June. We renewed contacts with personnel in the Clinical Departments of the American University of Beirut, Dr. Susan Williamson, - Obstetrics and Gynecology and Dr. Calvin Plimpton, - Medicine. The original contacts had been made at the time of the Middle East Medical Assembly when one of us (WJM) represented the Interdepartmental Committee on Nutrition for National Defense on their program. June 15 and 16 were spent contacting people around the University in both the clinical and preclinical departments who might have interest in nutritional activities within the school and the country. These included the departments of Biochemistry, Public Health, Pharmacology, Chemistry, Agriculture, Medicine, Clinical Pathology and Obstetrics and Gynecology. At 1100 hours, June 15, we met Mr. Richard Lippincott at the U.S. Embassy. He is Chief of the USOM program. Mr. Lippincott had invited Mr. Brooks, Chief USIS;

Mr. Creal, our Embassy Consul; and Colonel Stannus, Chief Military Attache, to be present for discussions. We outlined the aims and purposes of the ICNND program. With the Ethiopian film we were able to illustrate typical activities. The group seemed favorably impressed by the ICNND work. They volunteered to explore various avenues in seeking a request for a survey by the Lebanese government such as informing our Ambassador, Mr. Robert McClintoff, and contacting the Lebanese government through their Armed Forces and the Ministry of Public Health. Several suggestions concerning future follow-up were made. They requested that a copy of the Ethiopian film to be made available to them. They wished to insert an Arabic sound tract and utilize it in the orientation of Lebanese officials. They requested that at the time of the International meeting in October representatives from the Committee plan a two-day Beirut stop. It was suggested by that time official contact by the Committee with the Lebanese government would be in order. Mr. Lippincott is the key for future endeavors. From our University contacts, we felt that nutrition interests could be stimulated in both the basic and clinical areas although at present no one was working in nutritional areas per se.

We visited Dr. Sutton, Director of the Regional UNICEF Office, and discussed their programs in Ethiopia as well as other Middle East countries. Through him we contacted Dr. MacDonald, Medical Director of the UNRRA program among the Palestine refugees, regarding nutritional problems in their camps. We departed Beirut the morning of June 17 arriving Cairo at noon.

CAIRO: We were met at the airport by Noell Freeman, parasitologist with NAMRU-3. As we were in Cairo during a major Moslem feast all offices, including NAMRU-3, were closed until June 19. This in many respects was a blessing in disguise. Discussions with Drs. Kirk Hoerman and Noell Freeman concerned the Ethiopian report as they had performed, in the first instance, the micro blood analysis from the children and all of the parasitological studies. We corrected the preliminary as a few inaccurate statements were made. Hoerman has carried out further studies among adult Egyptian populations during the last six months. His work reveals similar abnormalities in the electrophoretic patterns of the serum proteins as observed in Ethiopian children, in adult Egyptians and permanent foreign residents of Cairo. In addition, he has detected up to five different hemoglobin fractions in single blood samples analyzed by starch-gel electrophoresis.

Captain Seal expressed his desire to continue nutritional activities at NAMRU-3. Point-4 technical aid is returning to Egypt early in 1960. Relationships with the Egyptians at the technical level have improved a great deal in no small measure due to the efforts of Captain Seal and the NAMRU-3 personnel. Final arrangements are complete for field work in Kala Azar epidemiology in the Sudan early in 1960. The area to be investigated is south and east of Khartoum. Needless to say, they have interest in any nutritional disorders, particularly proteins, associated with Kala Azar.

On Friday, June 19, at Captain Seal's request we showed the Ethiopian film and answered questions concerning the findings at the weekly NAMRU staff conference. Captain Seal invited Mr. Nigursky from the Cairo United States Information Service. The film was well received. Captain Seal requested a copy for use in the Sudan to show their Health and Military officials the ICNND program. He expressed a hope that this might stimulate a request from the Sudanese government. Mr. Nigursky made several comments about the film. For USIS use, he visualized two stories: 1. The people to people approach, the humanitarian aspects of this work. This he thought might have general distribution throughout theatre audiences in a country such as Egypt. 2. A medical and scientific approach, for workers in the field of nutrition. He indicated that he would send through his channels a memorandum to Washington suggesting that the film might be modified for these two uses and utilized by the USIS generally.

At Captain Seal's home that evening we informally met and discussed Ethiopia with Dr. Hugh Russell, Regional Medical Director of WHO - Alexandria. Dr. Russell was responsible for World Health Organization's survey in Ethiopia in 1955. He has provided some of his food analysis data for the ICNND Ethiopian report.

In Cairo, Dr. Teply traced down further information on Fennugreek. He obtained several samples from the Egyptian National Research Center, visited their facilities and learned of their current nutritional interests. We departed Cairo 0300 hours the 20th of June en route to Addis Ababa.

ADDIS ABABA: We arrived Addis Ababa at noon on the 20th of June and were met at the airport by Dr. Prince, Mr. Layman and Mr. Hackett of the Public Health Point-4 program and Mr. Herb Harris from Point-4 Headquarters. Later in the afternoon we went over the summary of our findings and the recommendations with Dr. Prince and then with Mr. Herman Kleine, Chief of the Point 4 Mission, the Point-4 Program. We ironed out a few areas which our mission people questioned. These seemed reasonable and in no way detracted from the technical aspects or implications of the recommendations. Following these meetings the summary, recommendations and programing portion of the significant findings were redrafted.

The Minister of Health had arranged for six of the original team members to assist in resurveying the school children in the three schools involved in the therapeutic trial of vitamins A and C supplementation. Dr. Prince provided transportation for the whole team which expedited our work. The resurvey was done June 22, 23 and 24 plus the absentees on June 26 and July 1. From personal contact and laboratory data we felt the supplementation program had been carried out as per

instructions since the last resurvey, - thanks to the efforts of Miss Hookam and Dr. Prince. The blood determinations - Vitamins A and C and carotene were performed in the Nutrition Laboratory at the Pasteur Institute by Ato Makonnen and Dr. Teply. Other team members helped out from time to time.

On June 22nd, Mr. Kleine arranged for a review of our findings, recommendations, and the film by representatives from Point-4, Embassy and MAAG. As a result of this, we edited the film in several areas. At their recommendation we carried out some minor cutting and rearrangement of the introductory of the film which over-all these changes enhanced its reception by the Minister and at the Seminar the afternoon of June 23rd, we met the Minister of Public Health, his Director General and Assistant Ministers. We reviewed the film in its entirety and presented the Minister with four amended copies of the report. This was done with the approval of the Embassy and Point-4 and our own concurrence. On June 25th, we obtained a meeting with General Marad - Chief of the Armed Services, and briefed him about the findings and possible military implications of the Ethiopian Nutrition Survey. On June 23rd, we saw Brigadier General De Gavre, Chief of MAAG. He demonstrated great interest in our findings and asked many questions concerning military personnel implications. We felt that the preliminary draft of the report was well received by all United States Mission people, and the Ethiopian Minister of Health and his staff. By June 25th, arrangements had been completed for the Nutrition Seminar on Monday and Tuesday, June 29th and 30th. This was sponsored and arranged by the Minister of Health, H. E. Abebe Retta and approved by His Imperial Majesty and the Imperial Government. The Seminar program was as follows:

Monday, June 29th

9:30 a.m.	Introductory Remarks	Minister of Public Health
10:00 a.m.	Showing of the Ethiopian Film	
10:30-12:30	Presentation of the Dietary, Biochemical and Clinical Findings	Dr. Teply, Dr. McGanitt
2:00-2:30	Presentation of Agricultural Potential	Mr. Molchon, Chief of the Agricultural Division Point-4
2:30-6:00 p.m.	Questions and Answers Period	

Tuesday, June 30th

9:30-10:00 a.m.	Repeat Presentation of Film	
10:00-12:00 N	Group Discussions: 1) Agricultural Aspects, 2) Health Aspects 3) Educational Aspects of the Nutritional Findings. Participants in each group had representation from the other areas rather than restricted to one's specialty.	
12:00-12:30	Final Remarks and Summary	

The reaction to the Seminar was most heartening. Initially there were about 150 people in the audience. This grew to nearly 250 persons on Tuesday of whom almost 80 percent were Ethiopian. There was representation from Health, Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, Defense, FAO and WHO - both local and regional, medical and nursing personnel from all of the hospital staffs including Yugoslavs and Russians, home economic students, other high ranking members of government and mission groups including the U.S. Consul, and our Commercial Advisor, the Director of Point-4 and many others. The discussion groups Tuesday morning, June 30th, were charged with the task of reviewing the Survey Team's proposed recommendations. Each group discussed these in the light of the presented data and endorsed, amended, corrected or added comments to these proposals. One can sum up their endeavors thus: 1) the recommendations were generally endorsed by all groups. However 2) discussions indicated the desire for more detailed program planning in several areas and 3) there were many additional recommendations and requests suggested. The team is developing many of these suggestions in the final draft to be transmitted to the Ethiopian government.

Finally the team members were concerned with the future development of the nutrition lab at the Pasteur Institute. Dr. Serie has become director of the laboratory. He is a most enthusiastic advocate of continuing work in the field of nutrition. Dr. Serie has drafted a proposal whereby the administrative and technical aspects of the Nutrition Laboratory would be supervised by the staff of the Pasteur Institute. At his request, the team arranged a meeting with the Minister of Health Tuesday afternoon, June 30th. Present were the Minister, Ato Ychannes, Dr. Serie, Dr. Prince, Ato Makonnen and Dr. McGanity. Dr. Serie discussed his proposal with the Minister. We informed the group that the laboratory equipment from the Nutrition Survey was now the property of the Minister of Health and as a result we had no rights concerning its future utilization. However, we indicated that this proposal was well planned and we endorsed it as did Ato Makonnen. The minister indicated agreement in principle with the ideas as outlined by Dr. Serie. We suggested that future assistance such as permanent equipment and consultant services could be sought from the ICNND.

During the past 6 months, new facilities had been developed for the Nutrition Laboratory by the Pasteur Institute. These are very satisfactory in size and facilities. We feel that the present laboratory personnel - Ato Makonnen - is insufficient for future growth. Ato Makonnen is a good worker but does not have the ability or imagination to develop original types of work. Under guided direction he is a most effective individual. In view of these recent developments at the Pasteur Institute, these need recognition in the final report. It would be helpful to suggest possible avenues of future activities of this Nutrition Laboratory.

Dr. Tepley left Addis Ababa the 30th of June en route to Geneva and discussions of the Ethiopian findings with Dr. Burgess and staff. This was done at their request. They are willing to consider the assignment of a Medical Nutritionist in Ethiopia within the foreseeable future.

Dr. McGanity left Addis en route home July 1st at 1500 hours via Frankfurt and New York - arrived Nashville at 1400 hours July 3rd.